



# The Interchange

*A newsletter for the employees of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation*

Volume 1, No. 2

Summer 2006

## Happy 50<sup>th</sup>, Interstate!



Photo: Charles St. Martin

A crowd of people watch the unveiling of the Biggest Map in the Smallest State in Newport on June 29. The map was created by RIDOT GIS staff and decorated by school children to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate System.



Photo: Chuck Aube

### Kaboom - Part II

Demolition continues on the old Jamestown Bridge with a successful second major detonation on May 18. Enough debris from the first detonation on April 18 was cleared by Memorial Day to allow for safe navigation. See RIDOT's Web site, [www.dot.state.ri.us](http://www.dot.state.ri.us), for photos and video clips.

## Rhode Island celebrates golden anniversary of the Interstate system

**By Charles St. Martin**

Given the massive size of the 46,837-mile Interstate system, it was totally appropriate that in honoring the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its creation, and Rhode Island's 71.2 miles of Interstate, a really big map was involved.

About 50 people gathered at the Eisenhower House in Fort Adams in Newport on June 29 to watch the unveiling of the Biggest Map in the Smallest State. The location was selected because this was President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Summer White House" from 1958 to 1960 and he was responsible for authorizing the creation of the Interstate system on June

29, 1956.

The map was created by RIDOT's GIS staff and then cut into 39 pieces along the borders of each city and town. Each municipality was then decorated by school children across

*Map, Page 5*

### Inside

- From the Director's Office.....2
- Iway bridge update.....3
- On the road with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary convoy.....4
- Summer intern program.....6
- TMC shares video images.....7
- Roadside mystery.....10

# From the office of ...



It's been a very busy and eventful spring, with many major projects underway.

Signs of progress and a job well done for RIDOT are all around, with clean roads, the old Jamestown Bridge demolition and Iway projects moving ahead successfully, and a joyous celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate. These are exciting and historic times.

The next big project to begin is the Warwick Intermodal Facility (WIF). In all the years I've been here at RIDOT, and as Director, there's never been a project that so defines the concept of what intermodal really is. Much credit is due to all those who worked in Intermodal Planning over the years, including Steve Devine.

Connecting the station to the airport will be a glass-enclosed skywalk, about 1,250 feet long, with heat and air conditioning, movable sidewalks and a 30-foot wide concourse. The

goal is to make it so travelers never feel like they're leaving the airport or train station. It's going to be beautiful.

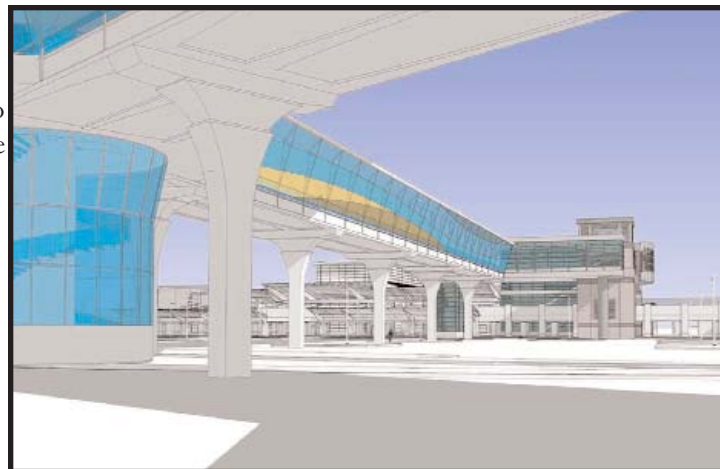
It's been a long haul in bringing this level of rail service to Rhode Island. Back in the 1980s, passenger rail service in Rhode Island, with the exception of Amtrak, was pretty much dead.

RIDOT came up with the idea to use federal transit dollars that were to be allocated for the I-84 project (to replace Route 6 and link Providence to Hartford) and the I-895 project (to link South County to Newport and Bristol counties) and trade them in to use for mass transit.

In 1988, RIDOT and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) entered into what is known as the Pilgrim Partnership, which provides for the MBTA to extend its commuter rail service into Rhode Island. Initially the MBTA made eight round trips to and from Providence. The number has expanded to 11.5 and in late July the trips will increase to 15.

The Pawtucket Layover Station is a big part of this, replacing a layover station in a residential neighborhood in Attleboro, Mass. This is a perfect location for a train yard, in an industrial area, next to the highway. The trains will now be in Rhode Island and better positioned to start the first run of the day.

Upon making its announcement about additional trips to Providence, the MBTA also announced it will pro-



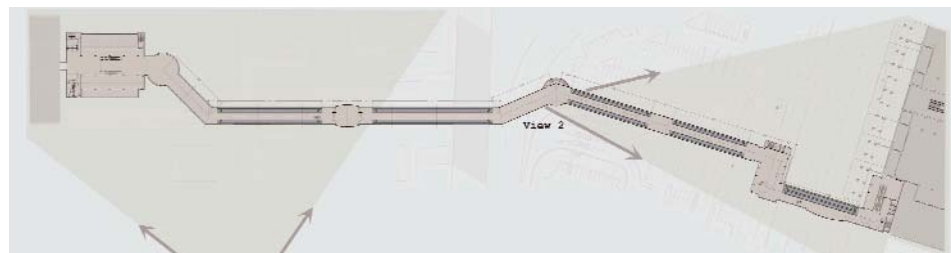
**An architectural rendering of the skywalk that will connect the train station and garage with the airport terminal.**

vide weekend service. In addition to the 15 daily weekday roundtrips, the MBTA will offer nine roundtrips on Saturdays and seven roundtrips on Sundays. The name of the line has been changed to reflect the added service. The Attleboro-Stoughton line will be renamed as the Providence-Stoughton line.

The WIF will be one of the few airports in a country with a direct rail connection. We're aiming to have it open by the end of 2009, along with a sister station in Wickford. We're also exploring future stations in Cranston and East Greenwich and possibly stopping in Kingston and Westerly. Also, the Connecticut Department of Transportation and their Shoreline East commuter train is considering coming into Rhode Island.



**At the WIF groundbreaking on July 17.**



**An aerial view of the WIF, with the garage and train station to the left and airport to the right, connected by a 1,250-foot skywalk.**

## The Interchange

**Editor:** Charles St. Martin

**Contributors:** Chuck Aube, James Capaldi, Heidi Cote, Cynthia Levesque, Dana Alexander Nolf, Christina Pimentel, Eric Seabury, Fran Segerson and Sarah Vaz.

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# A lifetime of service at RIDOT

**By Christina Pimentel**

As Rhode Islanders celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate, another of the state's transportation fixtures steadily inches closer to that same milestone.

Bill Riccio, a 67-year-old professional land surveyor for RIDOT, has been working in the Department for more 49 years. Along with a chronological connection, he has a direct connection to the Interstate as he performed a great deal of survey work for bridge structures and roadway stretches of the highway. Over the years he worked on the I-95/Route 37 interchange, parts of I-295 in Johnston, the reloca-

tion of Route 6 and the Westerly bypass (Route 78).

Riccio, a long-time native of Johnston, started working for RIDOT after graduating from North Providence High School. He started working as an engineering aid, and through the years held the titles of transit man, a principal engineering technician, Chief of Party, and finally, a professional land surveyor.

Riccio said he is still enjoying his time at DOT.

"The job keeps me coming back year after year," he said. "I love what I do."



**Bill Riccio**

## Letters, correspondence and good wishes

To the editor:

This letter is in response to the recent news articles regarding the addition of video to the red light camera system.

The Rhode Island DOT and the City of Providence have responded favorably to concerns that I and others have expressed regarding the lack of a video record in the new Rhode Island and Providence red light camera system. Those responsible for adding the video should be commended for responding favorably to constructive criticism.

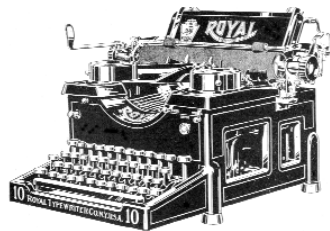
The video will go a long way in assuring that the 95 percent of ticketed drivers who are guilty will be found guilty, and the 5 percent who are not guilty will be found "Not Guilty." Thank You.

Roger A. Bennis  
Tiverton

e-mail to BikeRI:

Great web site!

Peter Thomas  
Princeton, N.J.



e-mail to BikeRI:

Great information about biking on the web!

Theresa Mayer  
Bristol, R.I.



### Passed P.E. Exam

John Preiss of the Highway Engineering Section recently passed his P.E. (Professional Engineering) exam. He passed on his first try. Engineers get three chances at the test.

## Iway Signature Bridge installation set for August

The installation of the Signature Bridge for the Iway, also known as the I-195 Relocation Project, is now set for mid August.

The 400-foot long bridge will be jacked up and placed on hydraulic modular transporters, which will literally drive off Davisville Pier 2 onto two waiting barges. After being secured for its trip, the bridge will take a six-hour voyage up Narragansett Bay and the Providence River to its final resting spot.

Once bolted in place, workers will have to pour a concrete deck, install railings, and perform various other tasks. Work has started on the elevated roadway leading up to the bridge. A portion of the bridge may be put in service as early as next summer.



Photo: Heidi Cote

RIDOT staffers Eric Seabury, David Cluley and Heidi Cote visited DeLand, Florida in early June to see the Graves Avenue Bridge move into its permanent location on I-4 via Self Propelled Modular Transporters (SPMTs). The company involved, Mammoet, will handle the move of the Iway Signature Bridge from Quonset to Providence.

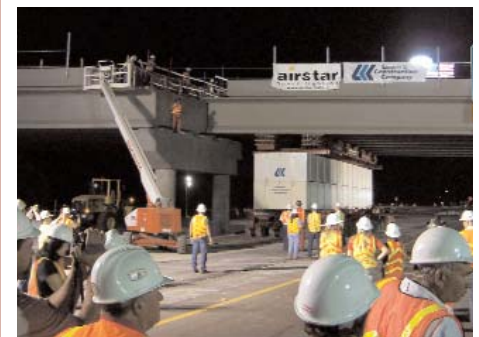


Photo: Eric Seabury

# Convoy completes cross-country journey in honor

Few things represent Americana more than hitting the open road, exploring all the nooks and crannies the nation has to offer. Dana Alexander Nolfé, Chief Public Affairs Officer, was one of a lucky group of people to experience this in June as she retraced the path of a historic cross-country journey that spurred the development of the country's extensive Interstate system.

The convoy from San Francisco to Washington D.C. that journeyed from June 16-29 was organized to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate system. Back on June 29, 1956, President Dwight D.

Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 to authorize construction of the Interstate.

The genesis for the idea actually came 37 years earlier when Eisenhower, an Army lieutenant colonel in 1919, accompanied a military convoy across the United States and witnessed first hand the poor condition of the nation's roads. Later, as Commander of the Allied Forces during World War II, he marveled at Germany's well-engineered Autobahn highway network and reinforced his belief that the United States needed first-class roads. Fifty years after the signing of the Act, the country is served by a 46,876-mile Interstate highway system.

The core caravan group was comprised of about 20 vehicles including a

1951 Hudson, trucks, RVs, buses, and more. Along for the ride with Nolfé was President Eisenhower's great grandson, Merrill Eisenhower Atwater, and as Nolfé put it, "other notable transportation movers and shakers."

Nolfé kept a journal of her travels and posted daily updates to a blog

Highway ... Nearly 50 motorcycles and police cars, with the aid of their helicopter and plane, cleared traffic off the local roads and highways for us. It certainly was the first police escort motorcade, or any motorcade, that I have ever been in. People along the sidewalks waved to us. Cars were held

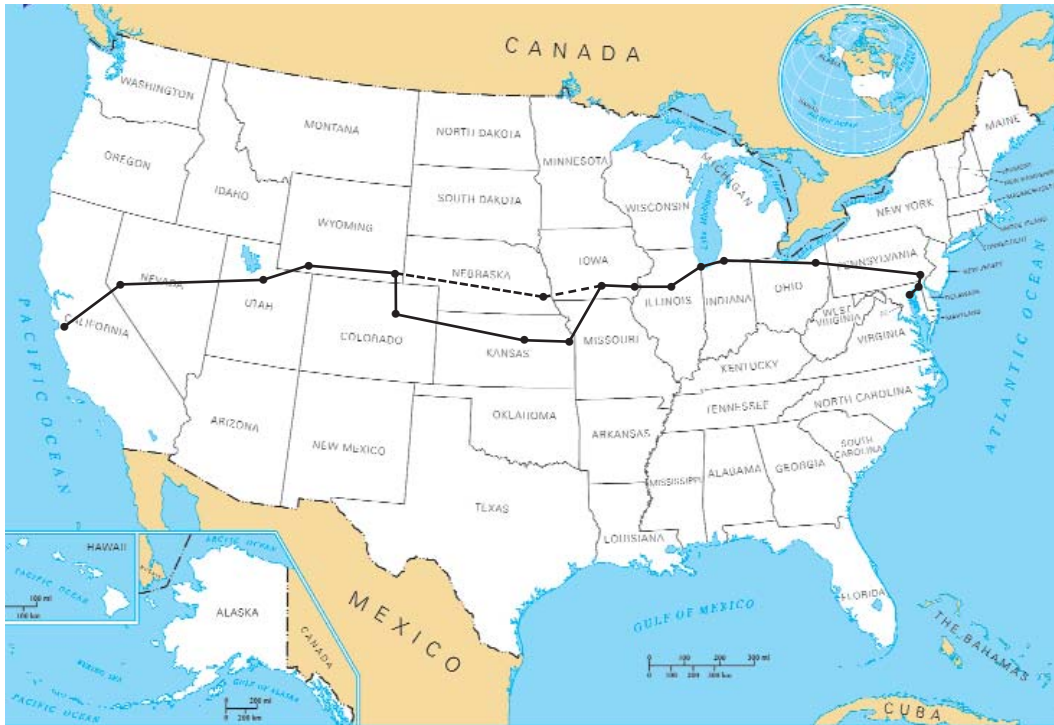
on side streets so that like a presidential motorcade, we could get through the city quickly and remain together. This was definitely not your typical commute across the streets of San Francisco."

**June 20, 2006 –**

**America's Road Team:**

"Today's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Interstate convoy stopped at the Lincoln

Summit Rest Area, the highest point at 8,640 feet on US-30 and I-80, that has a wonderful sculptural tribute to the man the Lincoln Highway is named



**The above map shows the path RIDOT Chief Public Affairs Officer Dana Alexander Nolfé took as part of a cross-country convey to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate system. Nolfé took the southern spur route, rejoining a convoy group that took a more direct route.**

hosted by Channel 10. The entire journal is archived on the RIDOT Web site and can be viewed at [www.dot.state.ri.us/blog/index.html](http://www.dot.state.ri.us/blog/index.html). Here's a sampling of Nolfé's "Life on the Highway."

**June 16, 2006 –**

**Launch of the convoy:** "The end of the road for the original 1919 transcontinental convoy was where we gathered to begin our journey - at San Francisco's Legion of Honor Park by the marker commemorating the western terminus of the Lincoln



**Nolfé tests out a 1956 Thunderbird that traveled coast to coast with the convoy.**



# of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Interstate system

*Continued from Page 4*

after, President Abraham Lincoln. Rain lightly sprinkled on us and winds whipped around a bit but Lincoln's head continued to stare down on us as we helped Wyoming celebrate their portion of the road that Eisenhower once traveled in 1919. These two great presidents converge at this spot with one giving freedom to the slaves and the other giving freedom via the Interstate. These actions changed America forever for the better."

**June 24, 2006 – Ethanol is a fuel for now and the future:** "Everyone knows someone who has an, 'I ran out



Photo: Dana Alexander Nolfé

## **The convoy takes a mid-point victory lap on the Kansas Speedway.**

of gas' story. Chuck Zimmerman, President of ZimmComm, is ensuring that doesn't happen to us by representing EPIC, the Ethanol Promotion and

Information Council, on the convoy. EPIC is fueling the two-week trip and promoting ethanol along the way."

**June 29, 2006 – Convoy's end; the Interstate is a symbol of freedom for Americans:** "Are we there yet? Unbelievably the answer is yes. The 3,000-mile, two-week trip is over and somehow it seems like we only hit the road yesterday ... A group photo was taken so that we can remember the names and faces of the people we shared this once in a lifetime experience with. We laughed and hugged each other and couldn't believe that we were strangers just 14 days ago."

## Map project highlights grand scale of the Interstate

*Continued from Page 1*

Rhode Island. The giant puzzle was reassembled at the University of Rhode Island's Ryan Center. RIDOT photographer Chuck Aube then climbed the rafters of the building and took a picture of the map, which RIDOT Webmaster Fran Segerson then turned into a poster that was handed out to those who attended the event.

There were no hard and fast rules for the children in decorating the map, just as long as they kept a transportation theme. Some children colored in sections, some drew pictures of fish swimming in the ocean, some added schools and other local landmarks. Each community was different.

Preceding the unveiling of the map, RIDOT Director James R. Capaldi, P.E. led a brief speaking program. He spoke of how many people take the Interstate for granted and how important it is to the nation.

"When the Interstate system was planned, it was to become the single transportation solution to support economic growth in this country," he said.

Despite its success, increasing congestion has outpaced the design capacity of many segments of the

Interstate. Although the system represents only 1 percent of the nation's roads, it carries more than 20 percent of the traffic and about 40 percent of all truck traffic. This leaves the management of traffic and exploration of other transportation modes a major priority.

"Today, RIDOT performs a considerable effort in managing the Interstate system," he said. "My job is to see that the Interstate continues to serve the motoring public for the next 50 years, while we look at alternative modes of transportation, such as buses, trains, ferries, bicycles and even walking, to make the most of what we have today."

Also addressing the audience was Lucy Garliauskas, Division Administrator for the Federal Highway Administration, Rhode Island Division. She echoed Capaldi's comments and said the Interstate's impact on the U.S. economy and

its social development should be recognized. "In short, it's meant having economic prosperity, improved safety and mobility, support for national defense access and defense readiness," she said. "President Eisenhower summed it up this way: 'Our unity as a nation is sustained by free communication of thought and by easy transportation of people and goods. The ceaseless flow of information throughout the Republic is matched by individual and commercial movement over a vast system of interconnected highways crisscrossing the country.'



Photos: Charles St. Martin

**Above, a section of the Biggest Map in the Smallest State in Narragansett shows the graphics children added to it. At left, a close-up of Westerly's section.**

# RIDOT gives students the chance to explore careers

**By Alison Natale**

Longer days and warmer temperatures are true signs of summer, but so is the influx of young people at RIDOT as high school graduates and college students forgo days at the beach or a vacation in far off places for a chance to gain some valuable work experience.

For years RIDOT has welcomed college interns from various colleges across the nation. This summer, RIDOT is employing 74 interns in its headquarters building and in various maintenance facilities throughout the state.

Interns work in office settings and in the field, and some, such as Liam O'Malley and Lateef Olajide (both students at the University of Rhode Island), do both. They are working in the Highway and Bridge Maintenance Headquarters in Warwick, often collecting data in the field for various RIDOT projects and back in the office.

"It's my first summer here and it has been a really good experience," Liam said. Lateef agreed and added that they are kept busy and everyone has been very helpful.

Meagan Savaria, a junior at Johnson and Wales University who is interning in the Management Information Systems (MIS) Department, heard about the internship opportunity from a friend who also works in her department. As a first year summer intern, Meagan works alongside Karen Smith. Meagan said she chose RIDOT because it complements her studies as a network engineering major. Under Smith's guidance, Meagan is applying what she has learned in school and is gaining a lot of hands-on experience.

"I like working in MIS because I actually get to do real MIS work and go out into the field," she said. "I am

treated like an employee and not a typical intern."

Similarly, Jay Dean, a second year law student at Roger Williams University School of Law, has thor-

Although not everyday as an intern is glamorous, there is light at the end of the tunnel. RIDOT Director James R. Capaldi, P.E. began his engineering career here as an intern.

The RIDOT summer internship program has opened the doors to employment for many other interns as well. Sean Raymond of Traffic Design interned throughout his tenure at URI before accepting a position as a project manager in August 2005. As an intern, Sean was exposed to many different types of civil engineering.

"I accepted a full-time job at RIDOT because of the wonderful experience I had as an intern working with Frank Corrao and Bob Rocchio," Sean said.

Jessica Rodas, who is also a 2005 graduate of URI, began interning at RIDOT in 2001. While working for Joe Bucci in Traffic and Safety Management, Jessica was exposed to different aspects of civil engineering. Hired in March, Jessica is now an assistant civil engineer in Bridge Design.



Photos: Christina Pimentel

**A group of interns at the Highway and Bridge Maintenance Headquarters in Warwick: Back row, from left, Chris Monteliberto, Greg Carcieri, Liam O'Malley and Lateef Olajide. Front row, from left, Tiffany Integlia and Sarah Marfione.**

oughly enjoyed his internship with the Office of Legal Counsel.

"Working so closely with Chief Legal Counsel John Affleck has been an invaluable experience," Jay said. "I have done a lot of hands on work and really applied what I learned during my first year as a law student to some real world situations."

## Adventures on the Interstate

**By Sarah Vaz**

Gas prices may be rising as fast as the temperatures, but that hasn't stopped some road warriors from hitting the pavement this summer. For these brave souls, it's not the destination; it's the journey clear across the country.

RIDOT's own Jim Choquette is a seasoned veteran of the cross-country trail. Together with his family, he has made the coast-to-coast excursion for the past five years, and could safely be called an



**Jim Choquette**

expert on interstate traveling, having logged almost 10,000 miles each trip. The motor home saves them the hassle of constantly stopping at motels and restaurants, having to unpack and repack at every destination, and they avoid the perils of gas station rest rooms as well.

For a month at a time, he and his family travel to visit friends and new destinations across America in their motor home, reaping the benefits of life on the road. The relax-

*Cross-country, next page*



# TMC shares video images with other agencies

**By Cynthia Levesque**

As much help as traffic cameras have been to the Transportation Management Center (TMC) as a tool for assessing traffic conditions and alerting motorists to congestion problems, they are about to have an even bigger impact on public safety.

That's because the TMC has implemented interoperable video sharing with both E911 and the City of Providence Communications Central Control. This allows E911 and the City of Providence (Police and Fire) to view real time video streams from the TMC camera system. The vision to leverage Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) resources and establish video/communication links with other agencies and municipalities has now been accom-

plished. This new partnership sets the stage for more sharing opportunities.

To make the E911 connection possible, a leased line communication link was installed between RIDOT's TMC and the E911 headquarters on Smith Street in North Providence. This, along with other equipment installed

by E911 at both ends, enables E911 operators to view all of the TMC video streams. The wire line connection was installed by E911 with the cost being funded by that agency. The Providence Communications Center receives all of the TMC streaming

system allows for non-recurring high speed data communication with no recurring costs to the City of Providence or the TMC.

In both cases, two-way communications between TMC operators, Providence Police and Fire, and E911

operators provides an invaluable resource for quicker detection and response to incidents while enhancing the understanding of mutual roles in transportation management.

For example, TMC operators now receive information on a regular basis regarding roadway incident calls that routinely go to E911. Shortly, the TMC will house a computer-aided dispatch station to be programmed by E911 technical staff that will provide the TMC with real time information from calls to

the facility that are related to roadway incidents. Providence Police and Fire are routinely alerting the TMC operators of incidents to confirm incidents and to enable the TMC to use other ITS communications equipment in order to maintain a safe responder environment while incidents are clearing.



**From left, Greg Scungio, E911 Principal Project Manager; Cynthia Levesque, TMC Manager; and Raymond LaBelle, E911 Executive Director, view an interactive E911 map program that will allow E911 dispatchers to identify traffic cameras closest to an incident.**

video via a wireless radio link. The City of Providence installed a Motorola antenna on the roof of the RIDOT's Smith Street headquarters to establish a point-to-point wireless link using a Motorola canopy radio system for video transmission between RIDOT and the Providence Communications building. This radio

## Cross-country trips are a summer tradition for Choquette

*Continued from preceding page*

ation and freedom afforded by cross-country travel is a lot like "practicing retirement," Choquette noted. This year, he will make the trip with his son, a recent college graduate.

"It's something every father wants to do with his son," he said.

Choquette added that there is an incredible diversity of things to see in this country, with places radically different from Rhode Island.

Choquette has certainly seen a lot of it. West of the Mississippi he encoun-

tered what he calls a slower way of living, like a "throw-back to the 50s and 60s." Out in the deserts, he observed beautiful rock formations and sand colors stretching on for miles. In the Southwest, travelers can absorb some of the Native American culture.

He recommends that anyone planning to travel to more than one National Park invest in the National Parks Pass, which costs \$50 and is valid for a year. Another way to simplify the trip is to apply for an E-ZPass account, an automated toll paying device.

This year he will be driving to the AASHTO audit conference in West Yellowstone, Mont. There will be plenty of diversions along the way. Choquette has mapped out a 6,200-mile itinerary with stops in Las Vegas, the Grand Canyon, the Petrified Forest and Mount Rushmore.

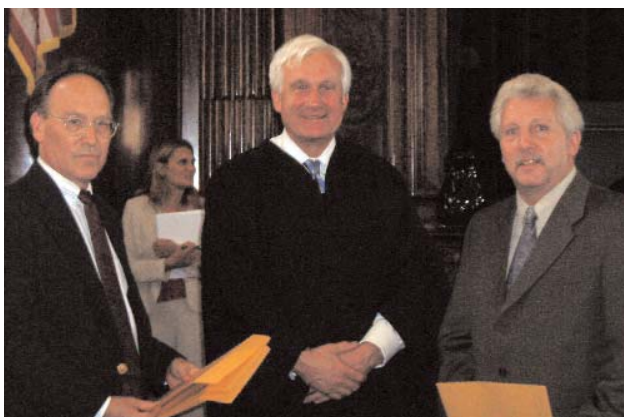
Traveling this way has intangible rewards as well, Choquette noted. Escaping the television and phone for a while allows families to spend quality time together, he said, and learn to enjoy each other's company without these amenities.



Photo: Alison Natale

## Quite a haul

Denise Robinson, left, and Mary Guiliano stand with their winnings in the W'RIDOT annual raffle on June 19. Robinson won a gardening-themed basket with tools, books and seeds and Guiliano won an Italian-themed basket with food, spices and recipe books. Both baskets also contained gift certificates.



## New Esq.

Joseph P. Pemantell Jr. (right), a Senior Auditor in the Audit Section, recently was sworn in as an attorney with the R.I. Supreme Court on June 13. Also pictured are, from left, Terry McFaydden of the Board of R.I. Bar Examiners and R.I. Supreme Court Justice Paul Suttell.



## Less grass, more flowers

A pastoral scene awaits motorists driving up I-295 in Johnston. RIDOT is examining stretches of highway where wildflowers would be permitted to grow, increasing roadside beauty while reducing the number of acres of grass to mow. As the wildflowers become more established, they will attract beneficial insects, birds and butterflies, noted Sheleen M. Clarke, Senior Landscape Architect, who was involved in the planting of the field back in 1995.

## Comings and goings: Report from HR

### New hires

#### Design

Francisco J. Lovera

#### Highway & Bridge Maintenance

Paul C. Pallini, Jonas W. Dowicki and  
Cheryl A. Bianchi.

#### Human Resources/Payroll

Lynn A. Cabral.

### Retirements

#### Construction

Earl L. Alves and Richard J.  
Raczewski

#### Financial Management

John A. Napolitano

#### Highway & Bridge Maintenance

Henry N. Knight Jr., John A. Manzi Jr.  
and William M. Tormey.

#### Highway Safety

David A. Schiapo.

## In memoriam

### Anthony G. Saccucci

Retired RIDOT manager

Anthony G. Saccucci, 80, of Wakefield died on May 31 at South County Hospital in Wakefield. He was a RIDOT project manager for 30 years, and then worked in the same capacity with J.H. Lynch Construction Co. upon his retirement from the State.

Saccucci was a World War II Navy veteran, serving in the Pacific. He was an avid golfer, an all-state baseball player on a championship team at Hope High School and a communicant of St. Francis of Assisi Church, Wakefield.

He is survived by Anna, his wife of 57 years, and numerous other family members.



## *New additions to the RIDOT family*



Gwendolyn Amelia Wohl, born March 31, is the first grandchild for Fran Segerson, Public Affairs. She weighed in at 9 pounds, 6 ounces.



Robert John Graham, born June 15, to John Graham, Maintenance Division, and his wife Lisa. He weighed in at 7 pounds, 8 ounces.



Sydney Anne Sanuth, born March 6, is the first grandchild for Shelia Urban, Senior Real Estate Specialist. She weighed in at 6 pounds, 10 ounces.



### **Summertime and the livin' is easy**

Despite the frequent rainy weather this season, the sun came out for RIDOT employees when it mattered. Above, it was clear skies on June 16, the date of the annual picnic for RIDOT Local 400, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers. From left, Anita Marshall, Highway Engineering; Valeria Bianco, Real Estate; and Kate Wilson, Highway Engineering. Below, a row of bikes stand in the parking lot of Cardi's Furniture on Route 2 in West Warwick, the starting point for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual RIDOT Breakfast Buffet Motorcycle Run. About 30 riders showed up for a 45-mile ride on May 21 to Mohegan Sun in Connecticut.



### **A Capitol experience**

At the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual National Association of State Highway Transportation Unions Conference in Washington, D.C., May 8-10, Robert Moniz, an Electrical Inspector (left), and Kathy Farwell of Contracts Administration (right) met with former Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta.



## Roadside mystery

John Travisono, Highway Maintenance, Gloucester Facility, found this unique relic while clearing brush on the side of Route 101 in Scituate. It appears to be an old road marker, dating back to 1809. A resident in the area had been talking to Travisono over the years about the carved markers, but he never found one until this spring.

Photos: Charles St. Martin



## Check up time

On June 22, RIDOT hosted its first Employee Health Fair. At left, Steve Drager, Assistant Chief, Highway & Bridge Construction Operations, gets his blood pressure checked. At right, Director James R. Capaldi, P.E., holds a body fat analyzer, a device that quickly calculates a person's body mass index.



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James R. Capaldi, P.E.



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